November 2025

BRAIN
TRAIN
DYSLEXIA!

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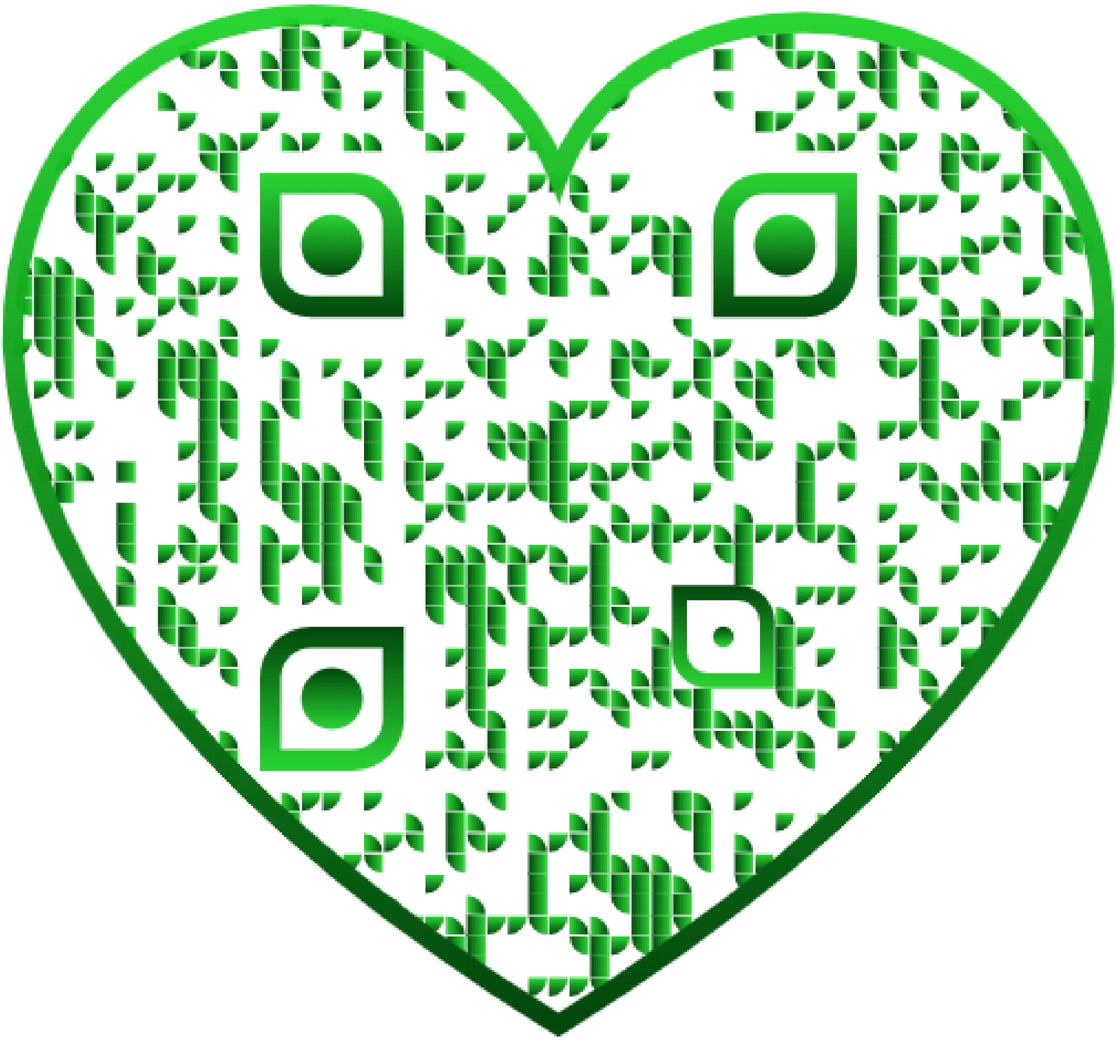


Welcome to Our Gratitude Campfire!

Hello Amazing Readers,

I am your Brain Conductor, snuggled in a cozy scarf and excited to welcome you to our November edition of *Brain Train*. This month we are gathering around our Gratitude Campfire, a warm and cheerful place where we celebrate the power of being thankful and proud of how far we have come. Every time we try again after something feels tricky, every time we ask for help or share a smile, we build the strength that helps our wonderful brains grow. No two minds think alike, and that is something worth celebrating every single day.

As the fire glows brighter, let's take a deep breath and remember how amazing it feels to keep learning and believing in ourselves. Challenges may pop up, but with patience, curiosity, and teamwork, we can turn tough moments into victories. This issue of *Brain Train* is all about being thankful for our unique paths and finding joy in progress, no matter how small. So grab a warm drink, wrap yourself in courage, and join me as we celebrate a month of being thankful and thriving together!

With warmth,
Brain Train Team

What's Inside?

Destination - Gratitude

Spotlight 03
Famous Dyslexic 04-05
Historical Figure 06
Real Kids Real Stories 07-08
The Adventures of Dex 09
Interactive Feature 10
Poster Page 11

Stop - Creative Feasts

Learning Fun Intro 12
Cooking Fun 13-14
Story Building 16-17
Art Zone 18
Tech Corner 19
Story Time 20-21
Gobble Gobble Giggles 22

Station - Resilience & Support

For You & You Alone 23
Mindfulness & Me 24
Asking for Help 25
Building Resilience 26-27
Expert Insight 28
Community Corner 29

Spotlight

What is Grit?

Grit is a small word with a big heart. It means having the courage and strength to keep going, even when things feel tough. For children with dyslexia, grit shows up every single day. It helps you sound out a difficult word, finish a story that once felt impossible, and keep trying when the task seems too big.

Grit is not about being perfect, it is about learning, growing, and believing that every effort counts.

Parents and caregivers often see this quiet strength in their children, the steady glow that keeps them moving forward. Grit is like a hidden superpower that gets stronger with every challenge faced and every small success earned.

It teaches patience, builds confidence, and shows that success is not about speed, but about not giving up.

So next time something feels hard, take a deep breath and remember your grit. Each time you try again, your brain grows a little stronger, your heart gets a little braver, and your dreams move a little closer. That is what true grit is all about.

Famous Dyslexic

Storyteller Supreme:
The Magic of Steven Spielberg

Steven Spielberg is one of the most celebrated filmmakers in the world, but behind his success lies a story of quiet perseverance and self-belief. As a child, Spielberg struggled deeply with reading. Words seemed to move too slowly, and he was often behind in class. Teachers sometimes thought he was not trying hard enough, and classmates teased him. It was not until many years later, when he was already a famous director, that Spielberg discovered he had dyslexia.

Finally, the pieces made sense. What once felt like a weakness was actually part of what made his mind so creative and unique.

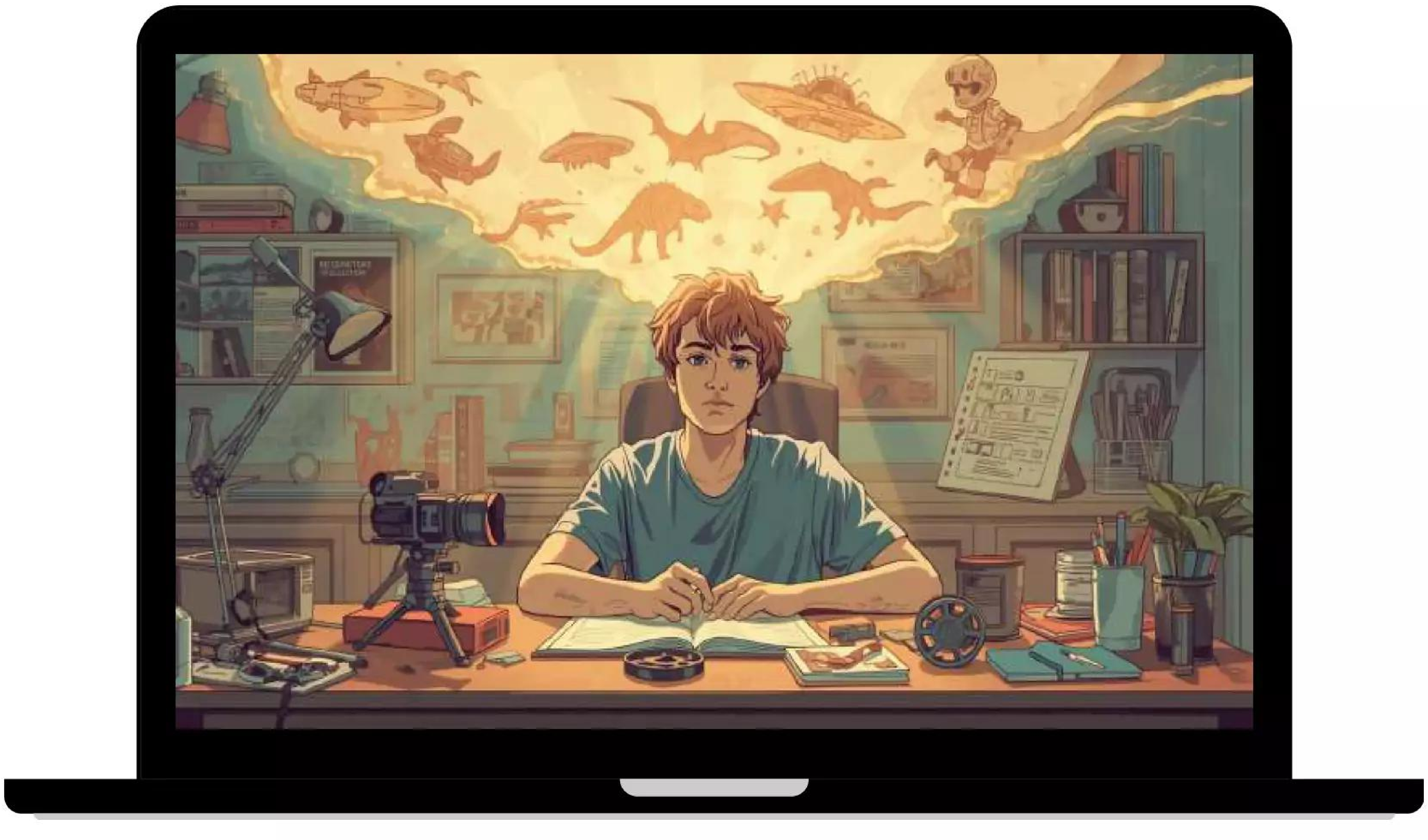
Instead of giving up, Spielberg found another way to express himself. While words on a page confused him, pictures and stories in his imagination felt perfectly clear. He began creating little movies with a home camera, using his powerful sense of visuals to tell stories that touched hearts. His dyslexic brain helped him think in pictures, noticing details that others might miss.

That special way of seeing the world became his greatest strength, shaping the unforgettable movies we know today, from E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial to Jurassic Park and Indiana Jones.

Even after discovering his dyslexia as an adult, Spielberg never hid from it. He spoke openly about needing extra time to read scripts or finish projects, but he also shared how deeply he understood what he read once he took that time. He learned to adapt, to rely on his instincts, and to trust his storytelling vision.

Every challenge became a new lesson in patience and persistence. His journey shows that reading differently does not mean thinking less, it means thinking uniquely.

Steven Spielberg's story is a reminder to every child, teen, parent, and caregiver that dyslexia does not define limits. It can open doors to creativity, problem solving, and imagination. The same brain that once struggled to read helped him build worlds that inspire millions. His grit, passion, and curiosity prove that when we believe in ourselves, no challenge is too big to overcome. Spielberg turned his difference into his magic, and that is what makes him the true storyteller supreme.



Historical Figure

The Determiner:
Thomas Edison

Thomas Edison, one of history's most famous inventors, is remembered not only for his incredible inventions but also for his relentless perseverance. Many historians believe Edison may have had dyslexia, which made school and reading difficult for him as a child. Instead of letting this slow him down, he used his curiosity and hands-on learning to explore the world. Edison loved experimenting, tinkering, and testing ideas, always asking questions and never fearing mistakes. This unique way of thinking helped him see solutions that others might miss and guided him toward inventions that changed the world.

Edison is famously known for saying he did not fail but rather found 10,000 ways that did not work.

This mindset of determination and resilience is what made him a true problem solver. Children with dyslexia, teens, and parents can take inspiration from his story, learning that struggling with reading or school does not mean you cannot achieve greatness. Edison's life shows that perseverance, creativity, and a willingness to keep trying are far more important than immediate success. His story reminds us that with patience, curiosity, and grit, every challenge can lead to discovery and innovation.

Real Kids, Real Stories

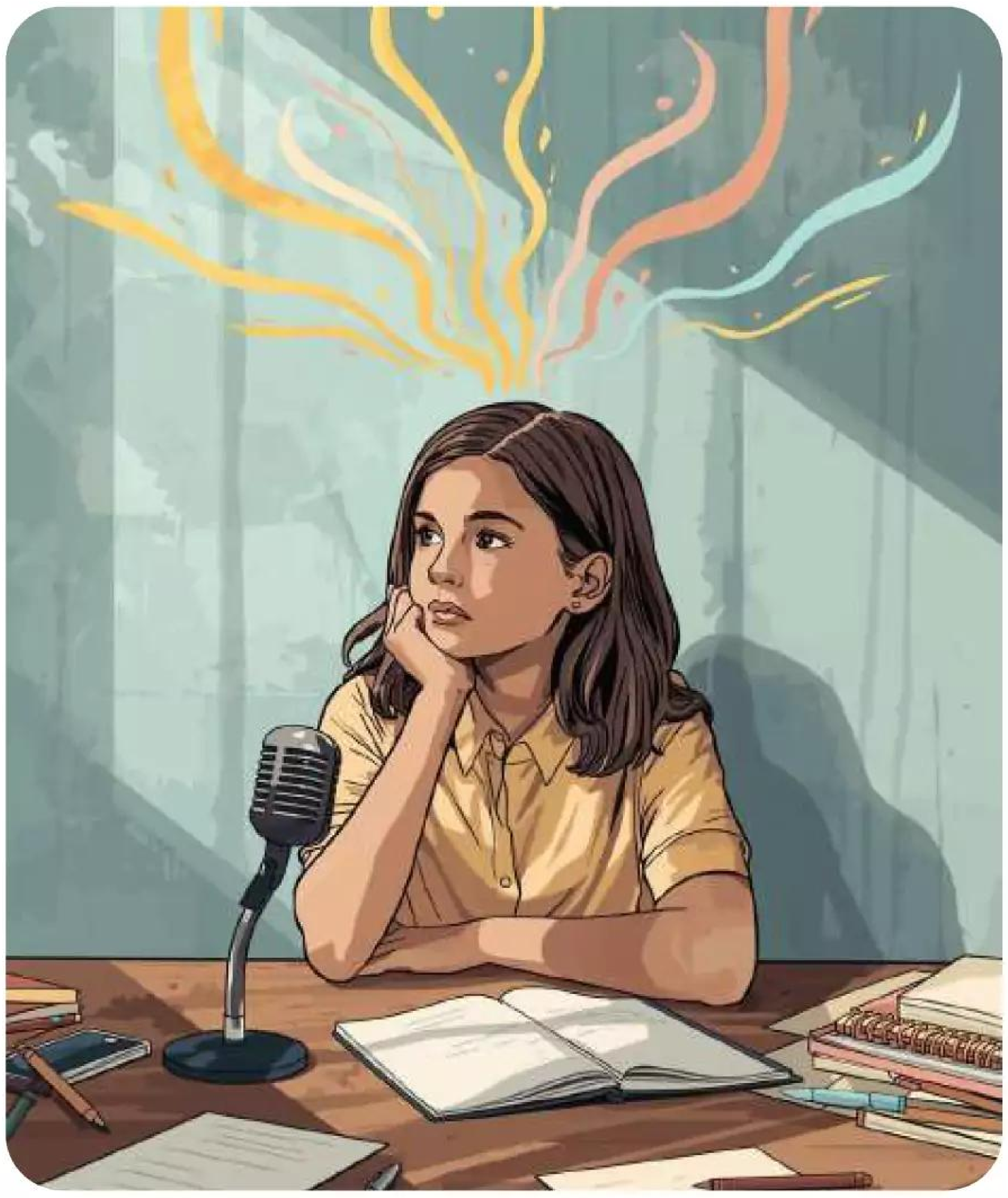
Meet Maya,
The Young Poet!

Q: Maya, how did you first discover poetry?

A: "I started writing poems when I was eight," Maya shares. "At first, I just liked saying things out loud. I couldn't read or write very fast because of my dyslexia, but I could speak. I realized I could turn my thoughts into words in a way that felt magical. Poetry became my favorite way to show how I see the world, and I've been writing ever since."

Q: What's your proudest moment so far?

A: "Being invited to perform my poem at a local festival," she says with a smile, "was incredible. I felt seen and heard. That's why I keep writing. Each poem is a chance to celebrate my ideas, my mind, and the way I see the world."



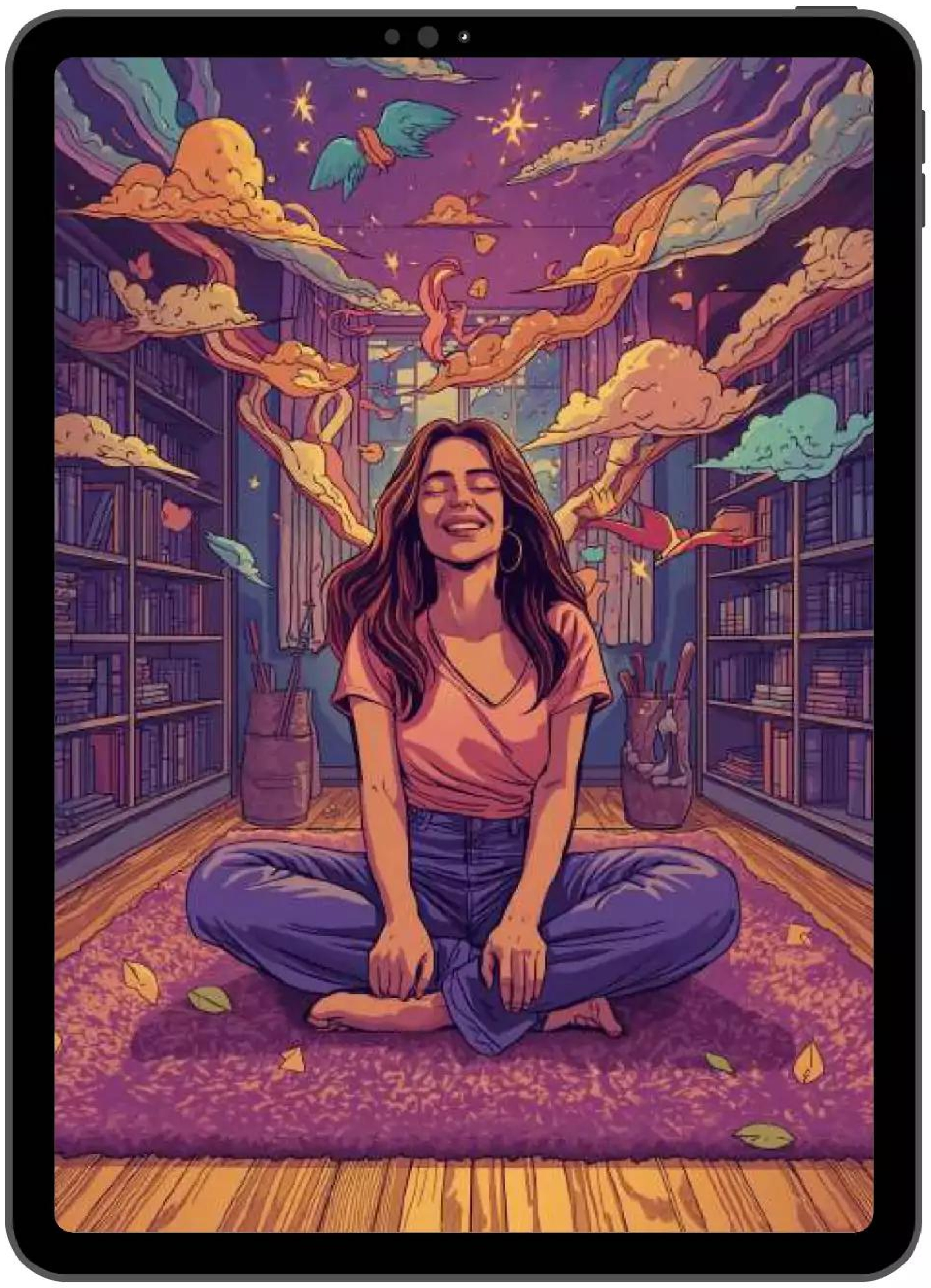
Q: How do you come up with your poems?

A: "I record my ideas first," Maya explains. "I speak them into my phone so I don't have to worry about spelling or grammar. Later, I write them down. This way, I capture the feeling and rhythm first. If I try to write everything at once, I lose the excitement of the idea. Speaking first keeps the poem alive."

Q: How does your brain help you write poetry?

A: “Because I struggled with reading, I learned to listen closely,” she says. “I hear words and sounds differently, and that makes me notice patterns that others might miss. My brain helps me create unique metaphors and images.

Sometimes I think of one thing, but it turns into something completely unexpected, and that’s the part I love the most.”



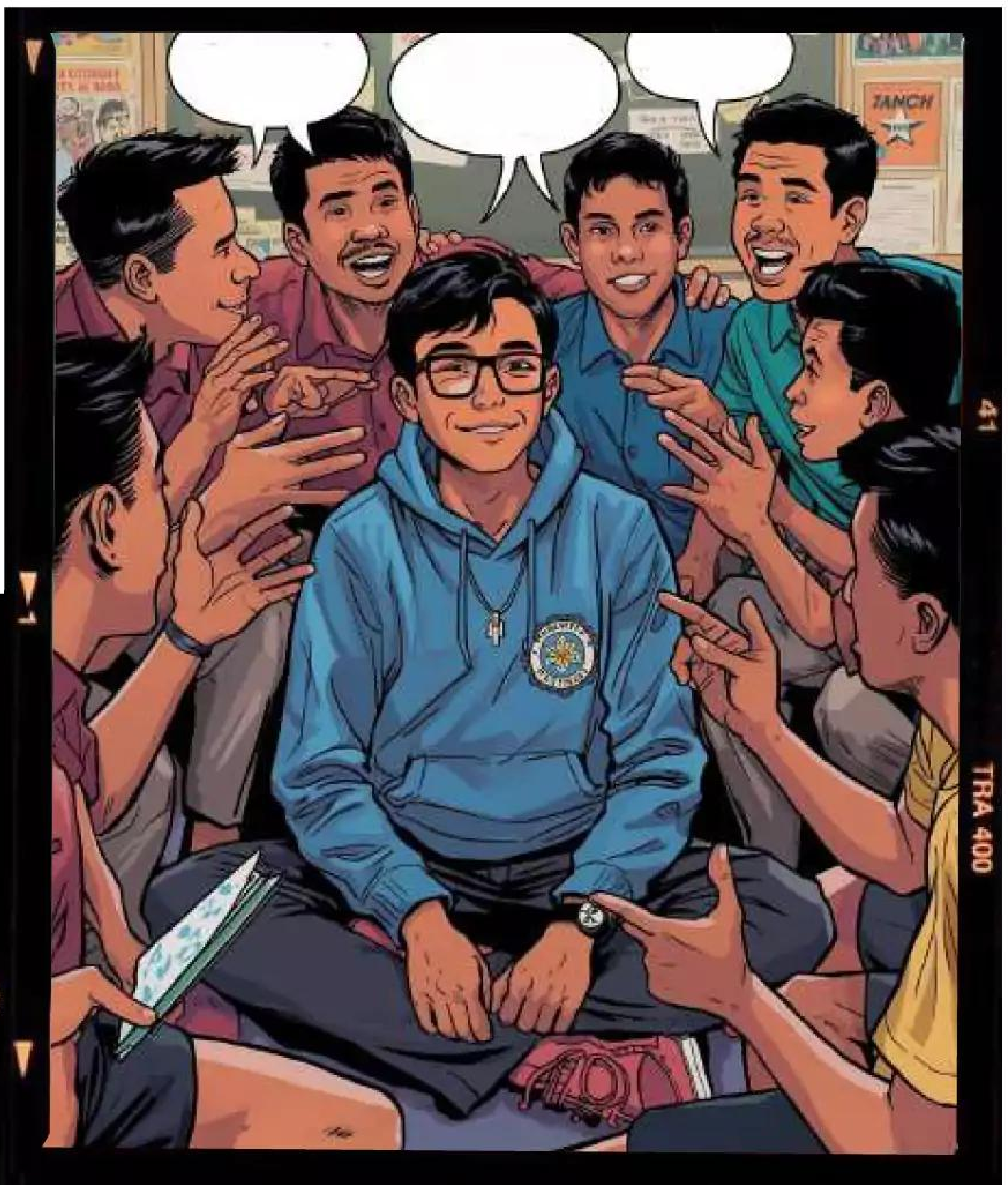
Q: What do you want other kids and teens to know about poetry?

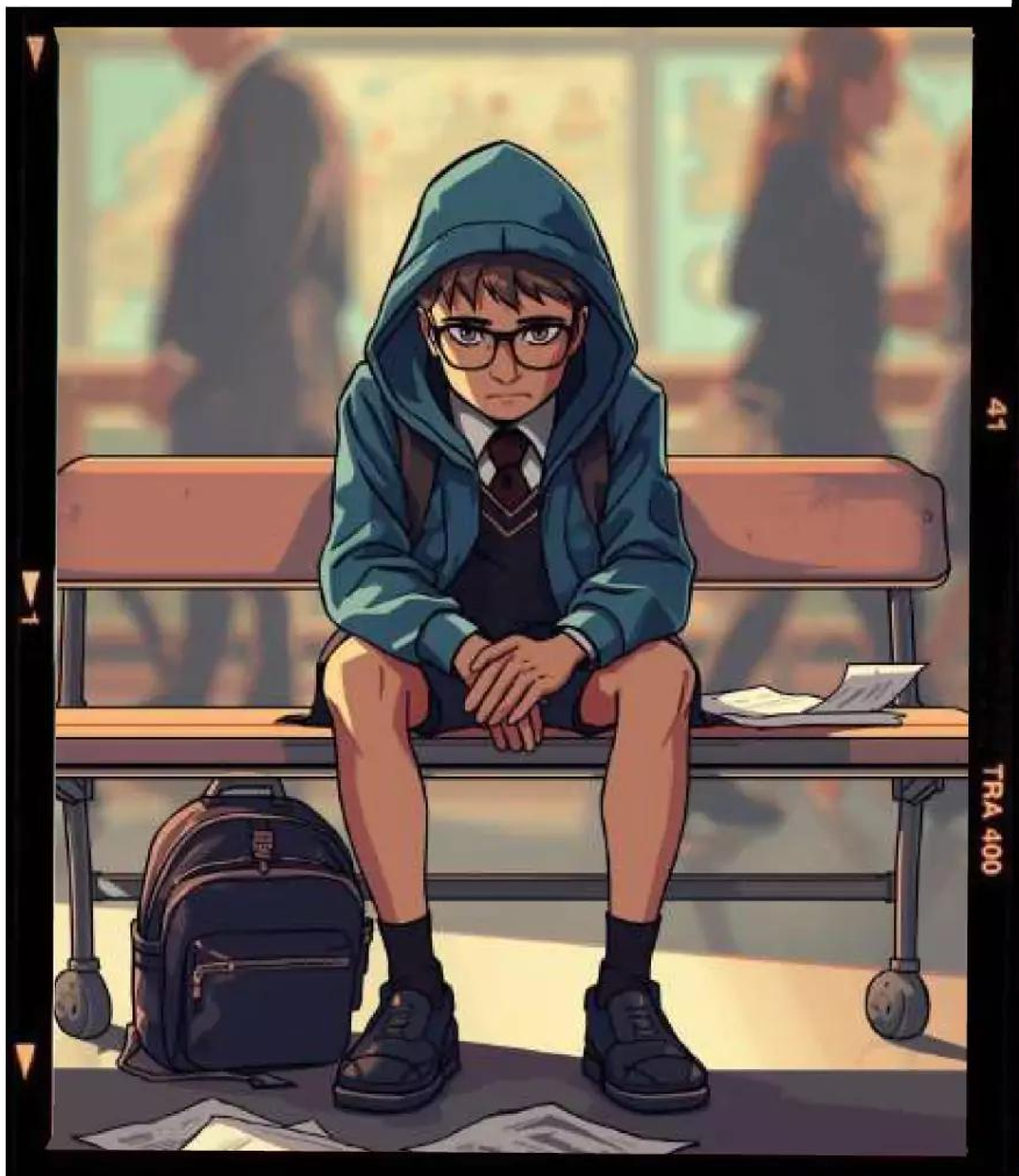
A: “Poetry lets me share my thoughts without worrying about being perfect,” Maya shares. “I want other kids with learning differences to know that it’s okay to do things differently. Your brain works in its own amazing way, and you can make something beautiful with it.

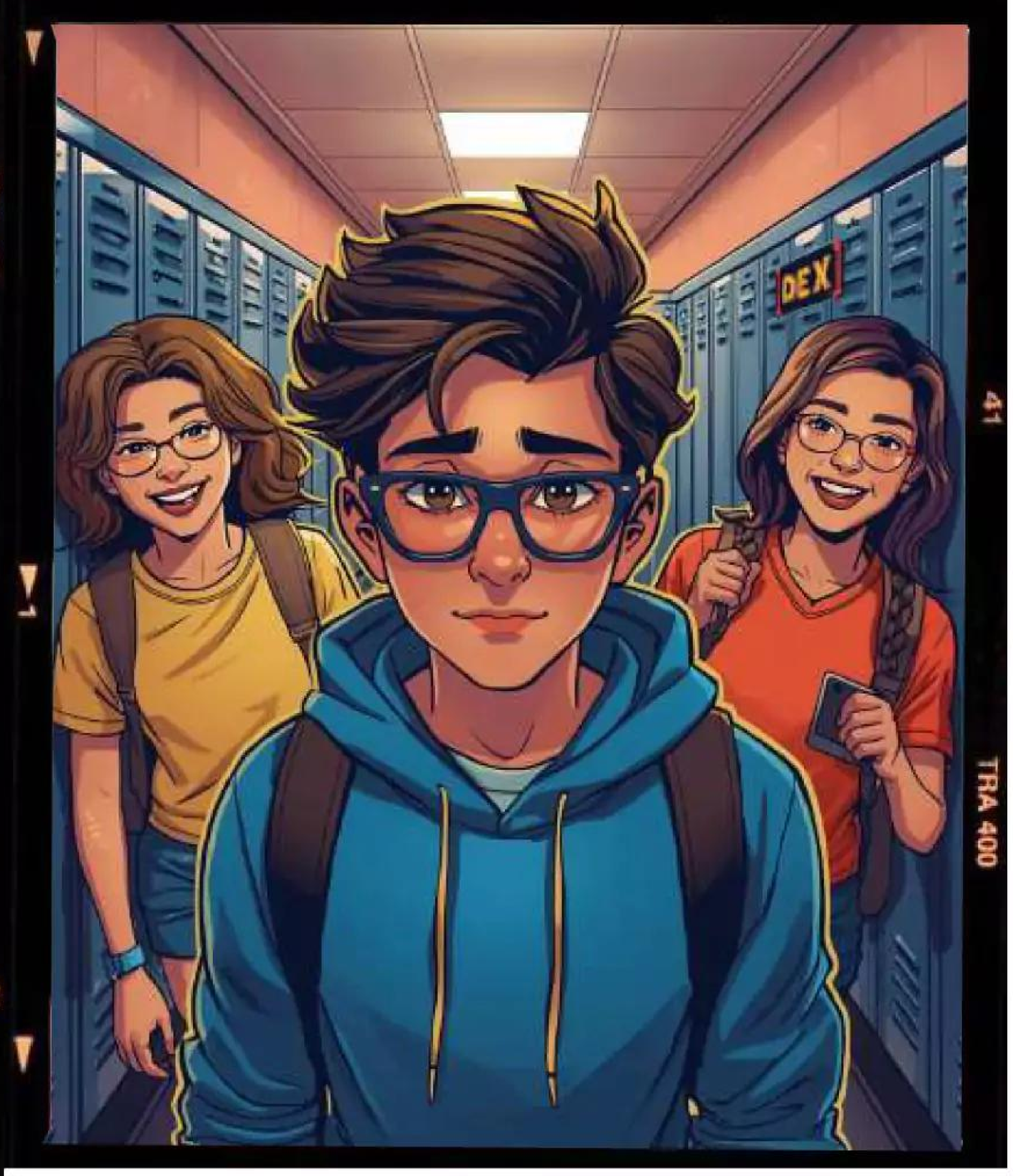
Poetry isn’t just words on paper, it’s your voice, your imagination, and your heart.”

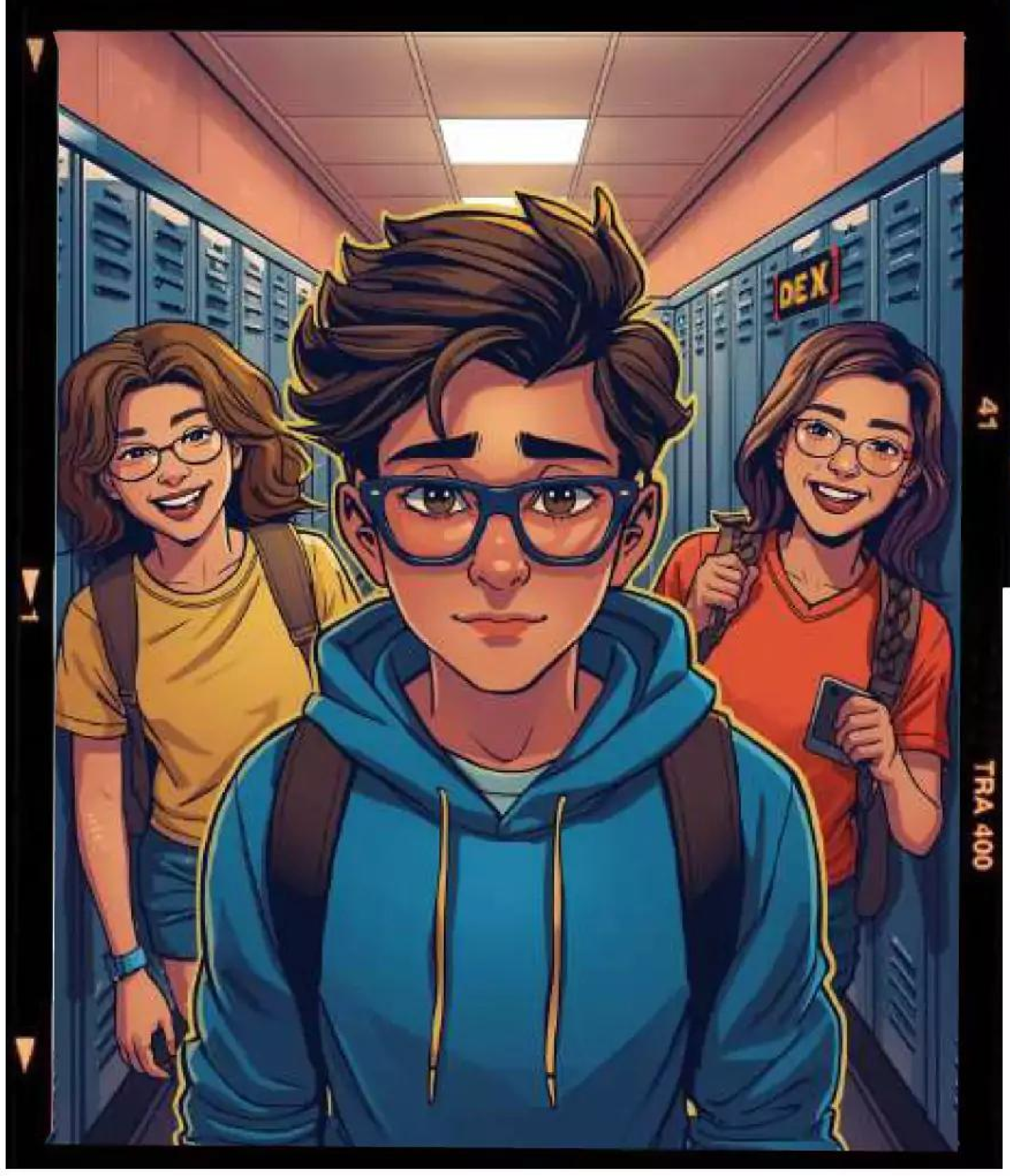
The Adventures of Dex the Dyslexic Detective

Dex, wearing his school uniform, blue hoodie, and glasses, feels sad at school until his friends approach to support him.

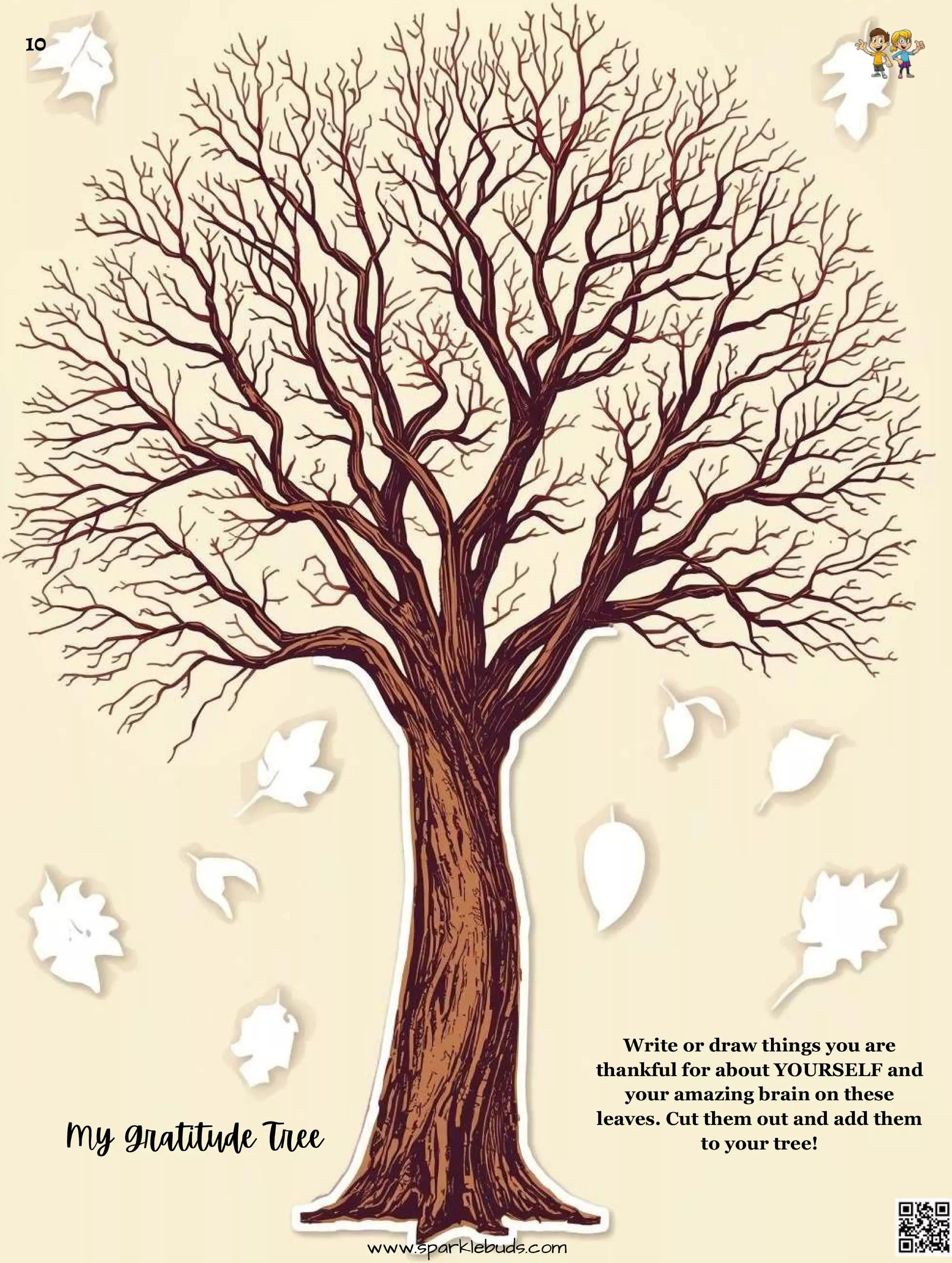








His friends share things they appreciate about Dex, lifting his spirits, and he smiles, feeling confident and encouraged again.



My Gratitude Tree

Write or draw things you are thankful for about YOURSELF and your amazing brain on these leaves. Cut them out and add them to your tree!

RESILIENCE

I TRY. I STUMBLE. I LEARN. I TRY AGAIN. I AM STRONG.

MY NAME IS ………………………………………

AND I AM…………………………………………

……………………………………………………………

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Learning Fun Intro

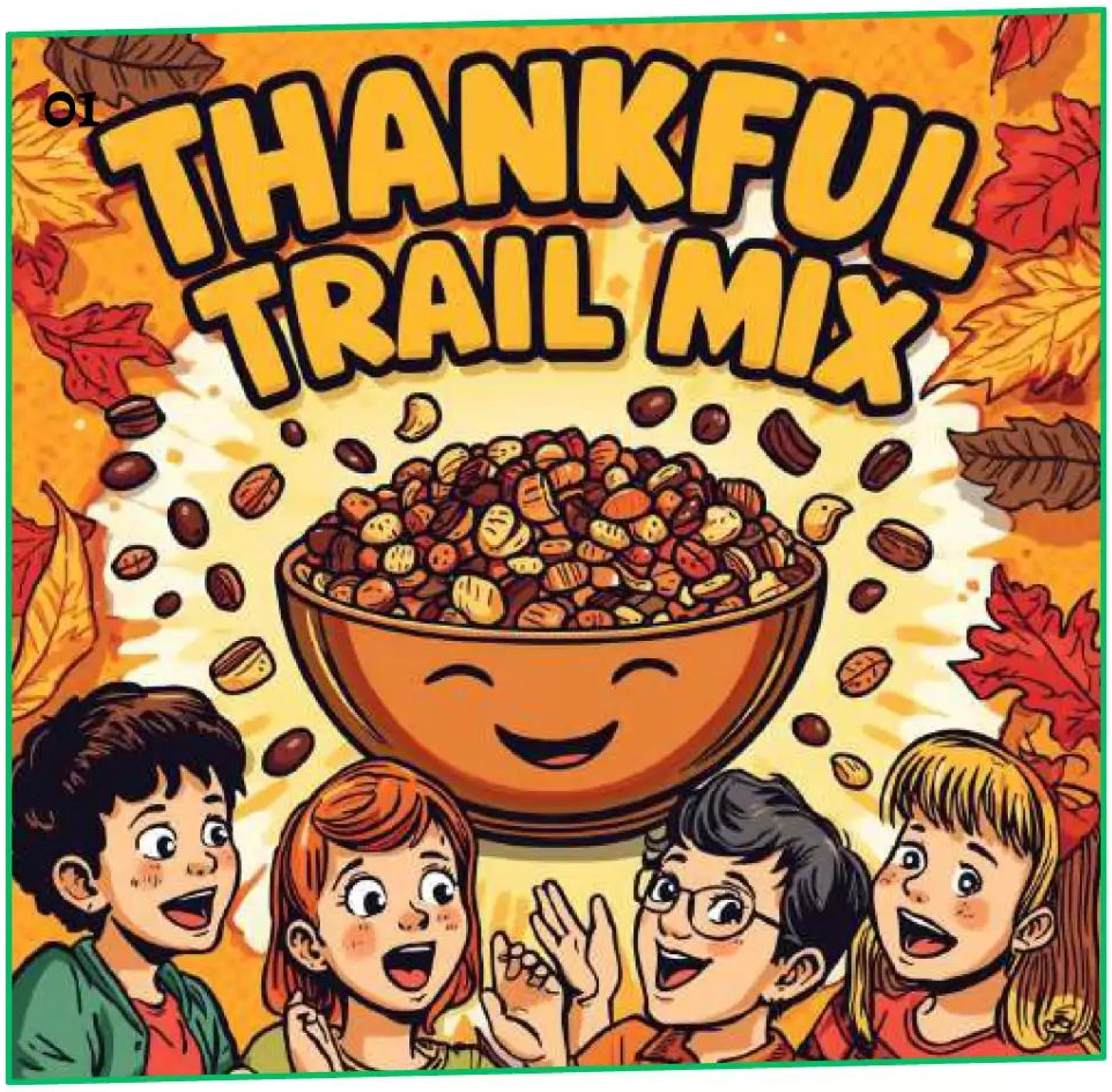
Feast Your Mind!

Welcome to our Learning Fun Intro, a special space where we celebrate the joy of exploring new ideas, just like enjoying a Thanksgiving feast. Just as a Thanksgiving table is full of delicious food, our section is filled with fun activities, games, and creative challenges designed to excite your brain.

Kids and teens with dyslexia can especially enjoy these ideas because they are playful, hands-on, and engaging, helping them learn in ways that feel natural and enjoyable. Parents and caregivers will find plenty of tips and strategies to support learning, while keeping the experience light and encouraging. Here, curiosity is the main course, imagination is the side, and every small discovery is a treat to savor.

In this section, you will find activities that stretch your mind while making learning feel like a celebration. There are puzzles, creative writing prompts, brain teasers, and interactive challenges that help build confidence and strengthen skills without pressure. Each activity is meant to be shared, enjoyed, and celebrated, making learning a positive experience for everyone. So get ready to grab a seat, explore, and feast your mind with ideas that are nourishing, exciting, and full of possibilities.

Thankful Trail Mix Recipe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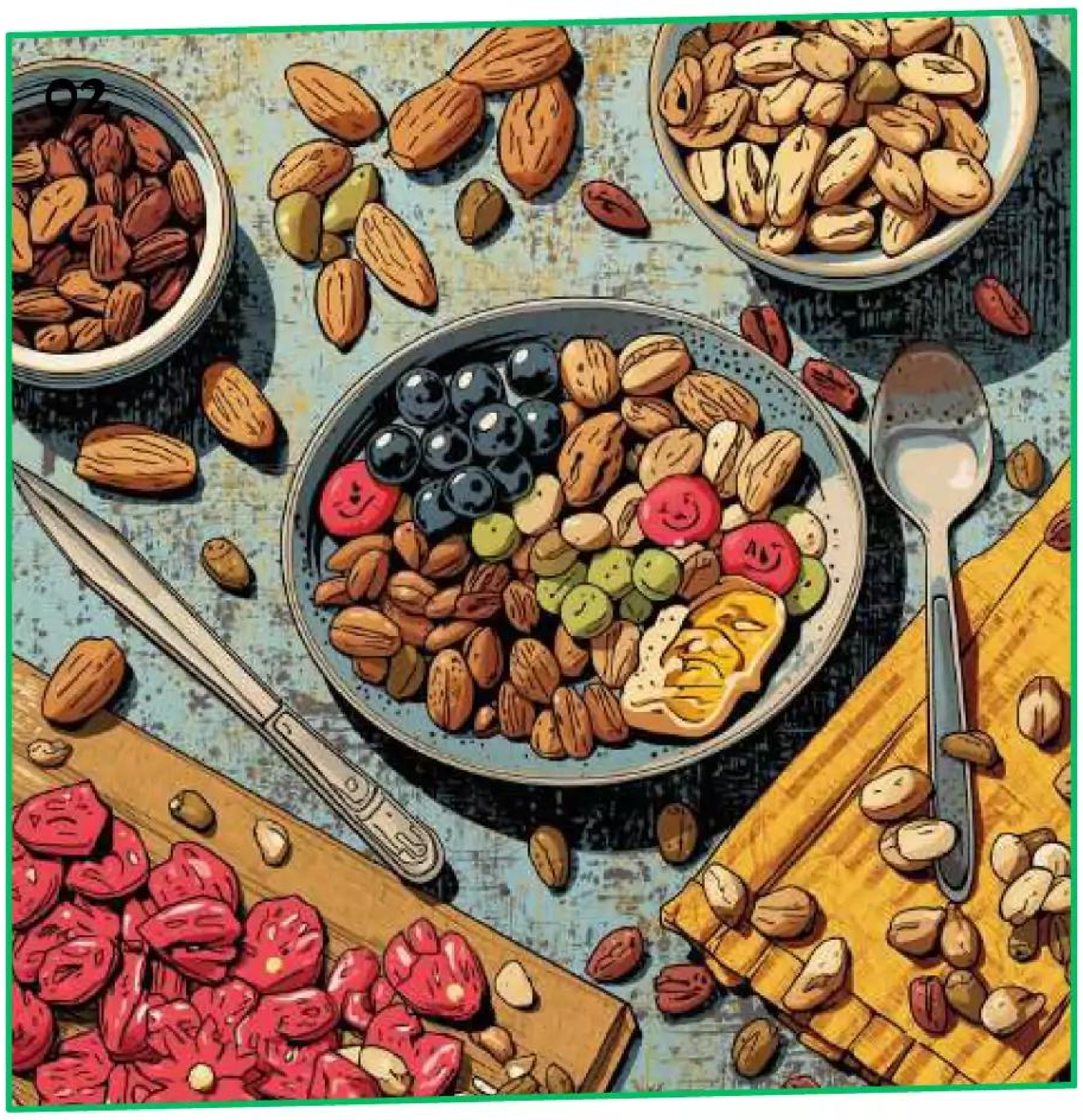
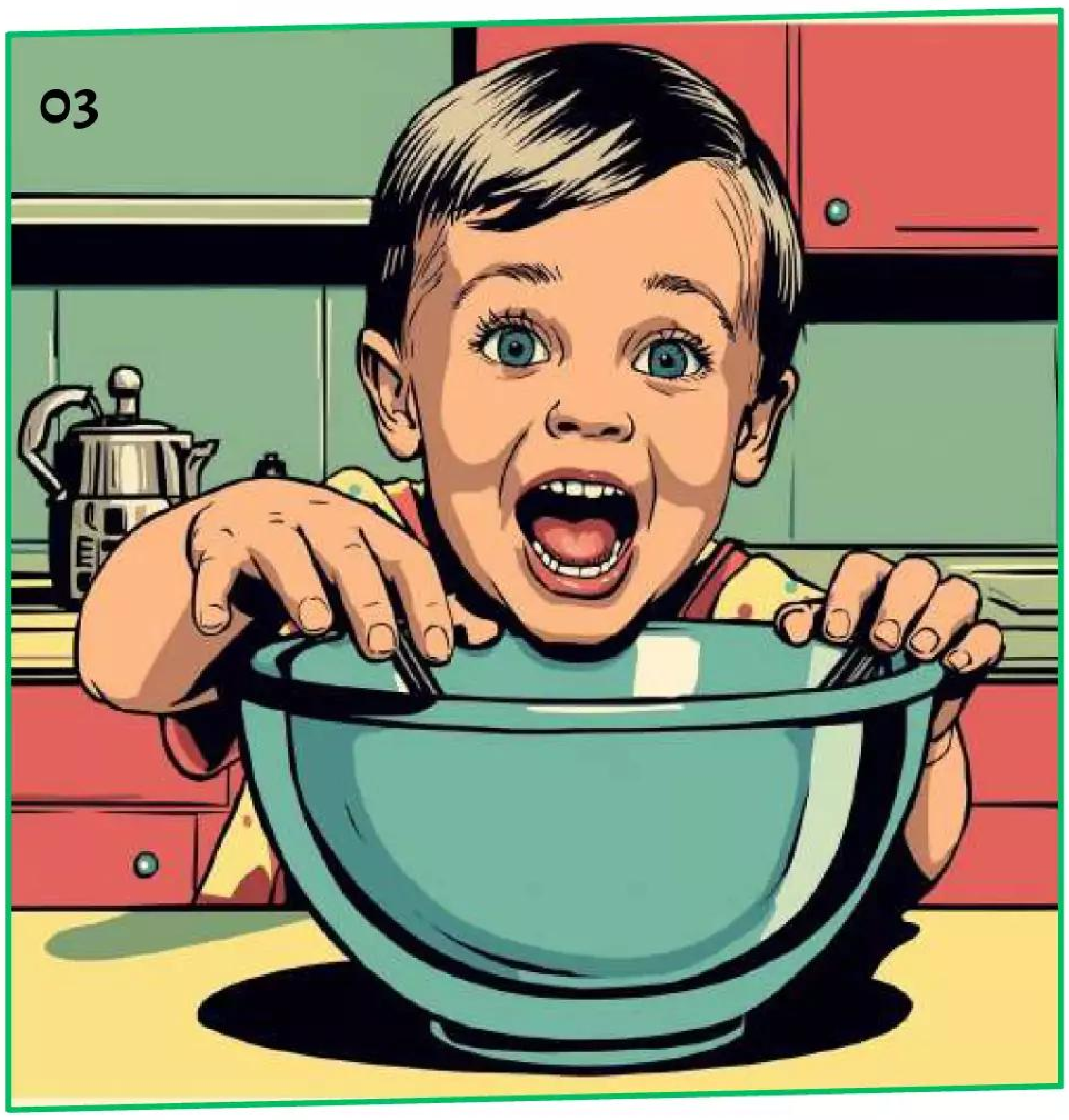
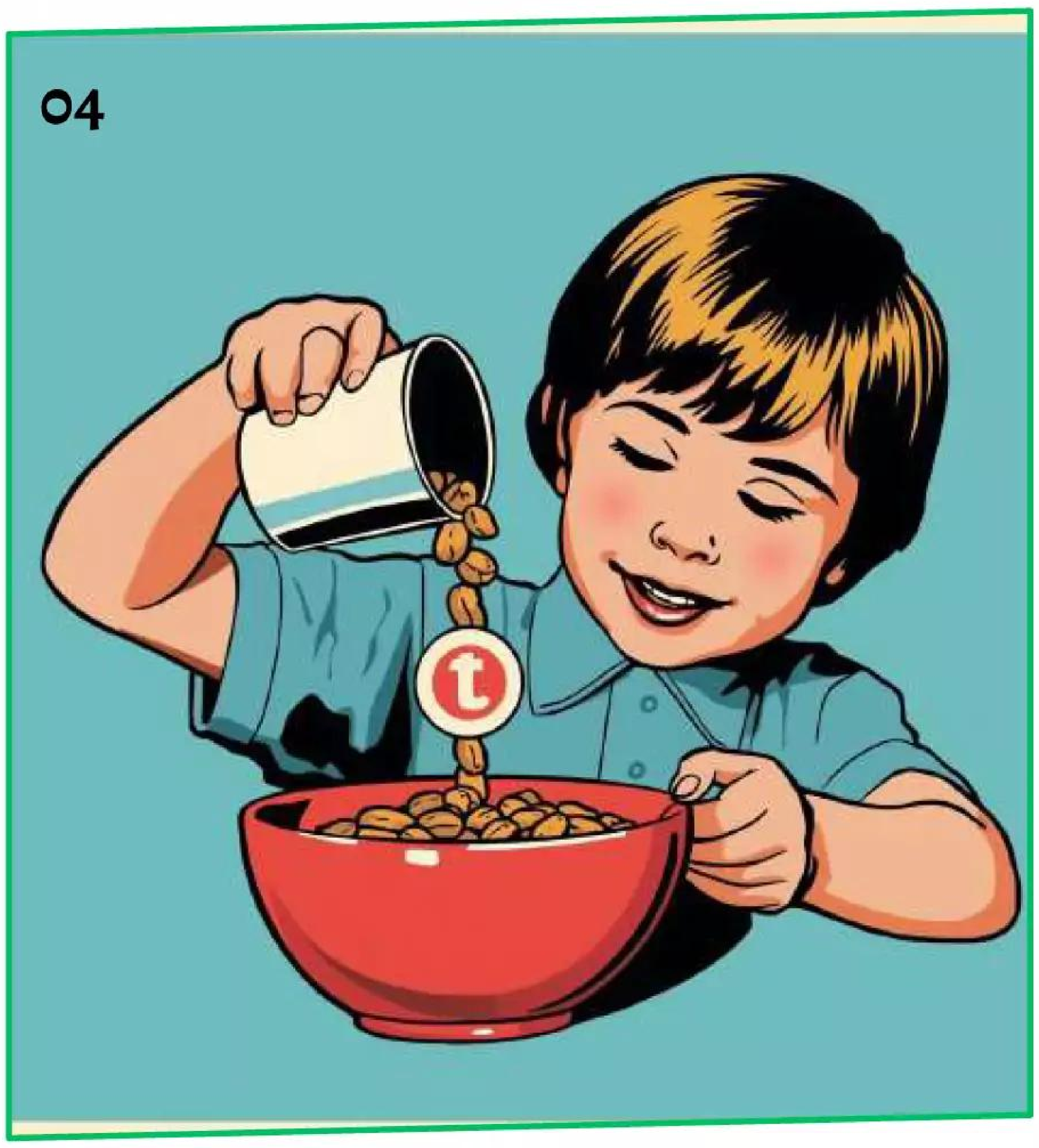
THANKFUL
TRAIL MIX



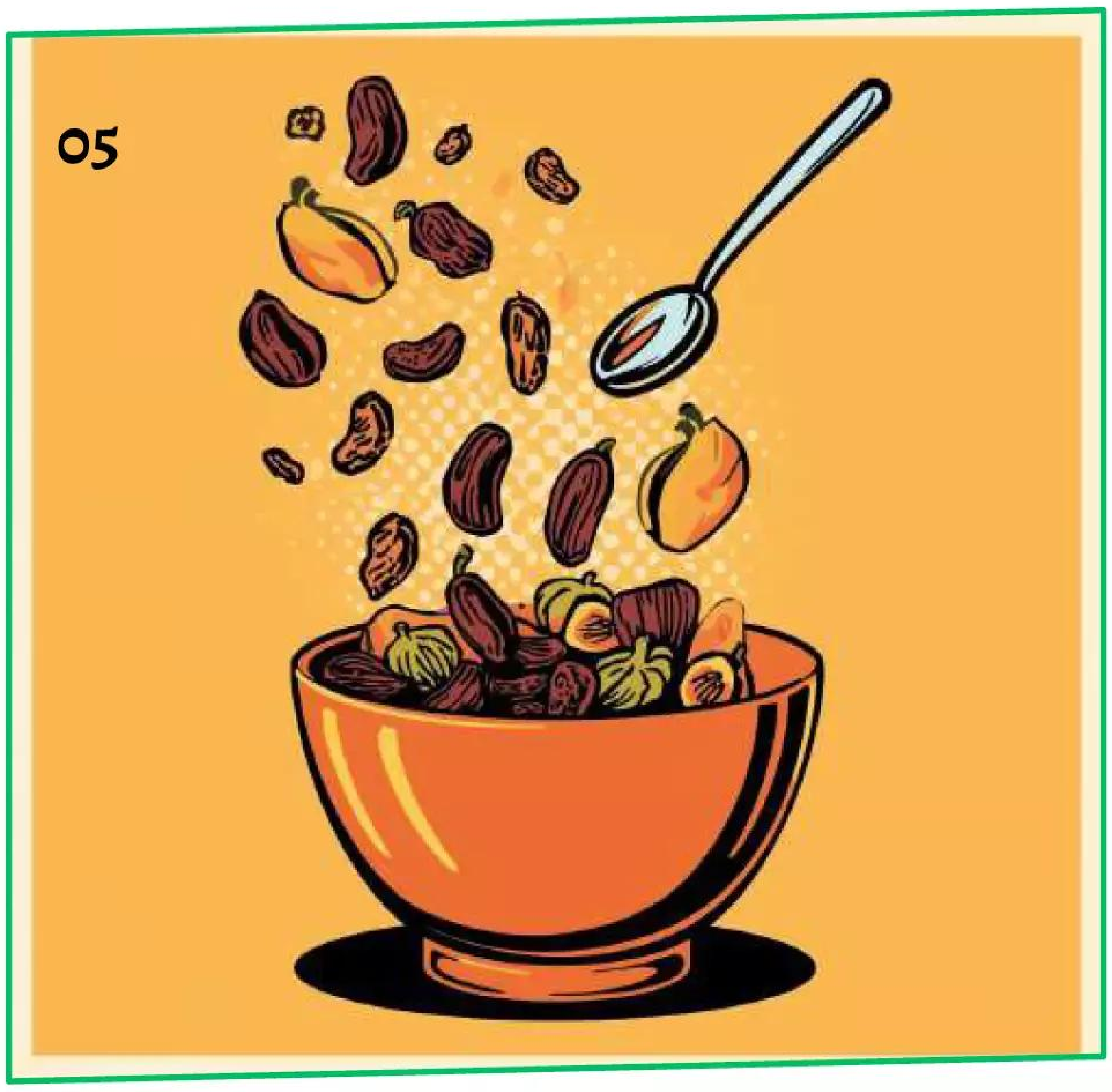


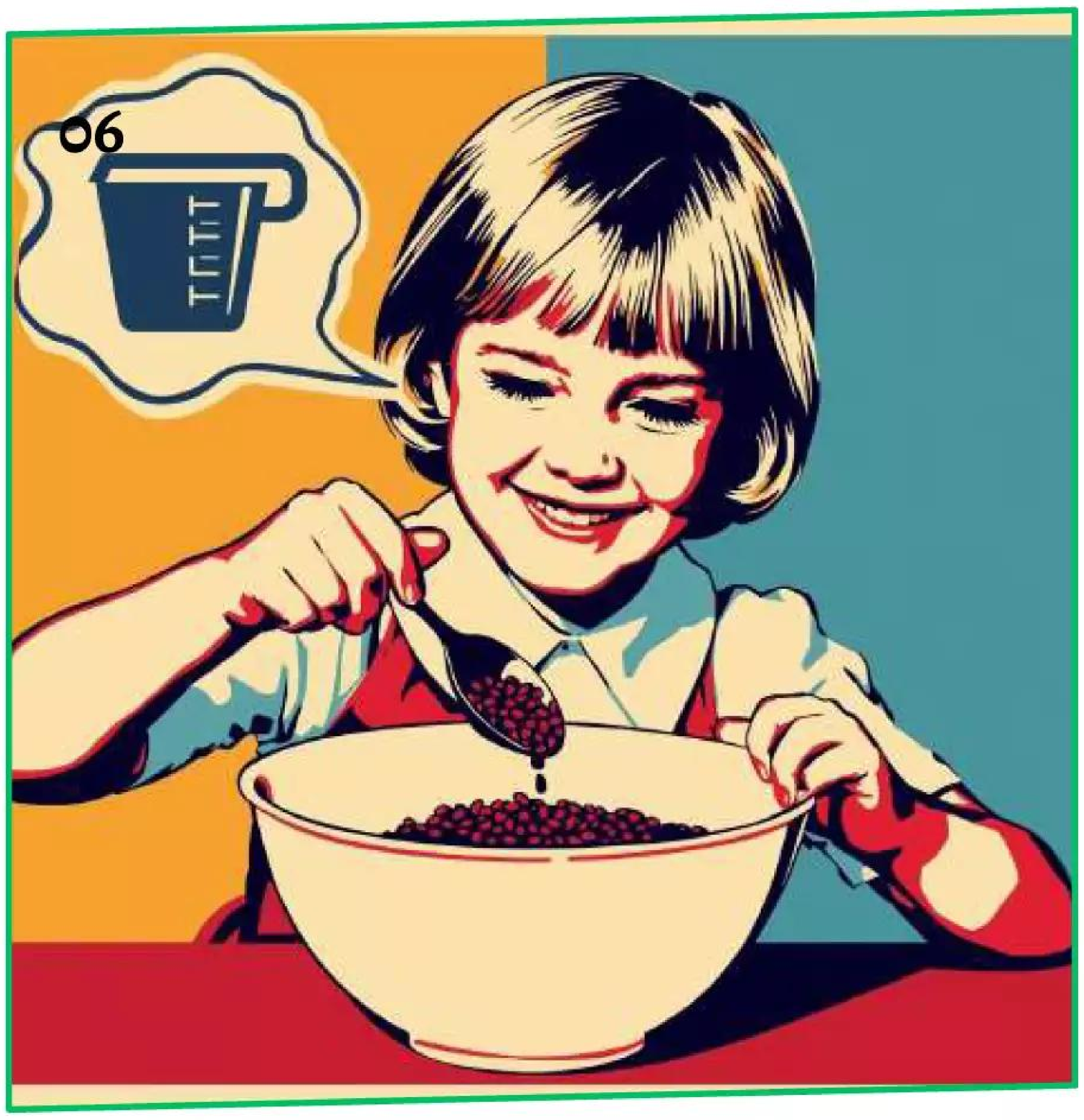


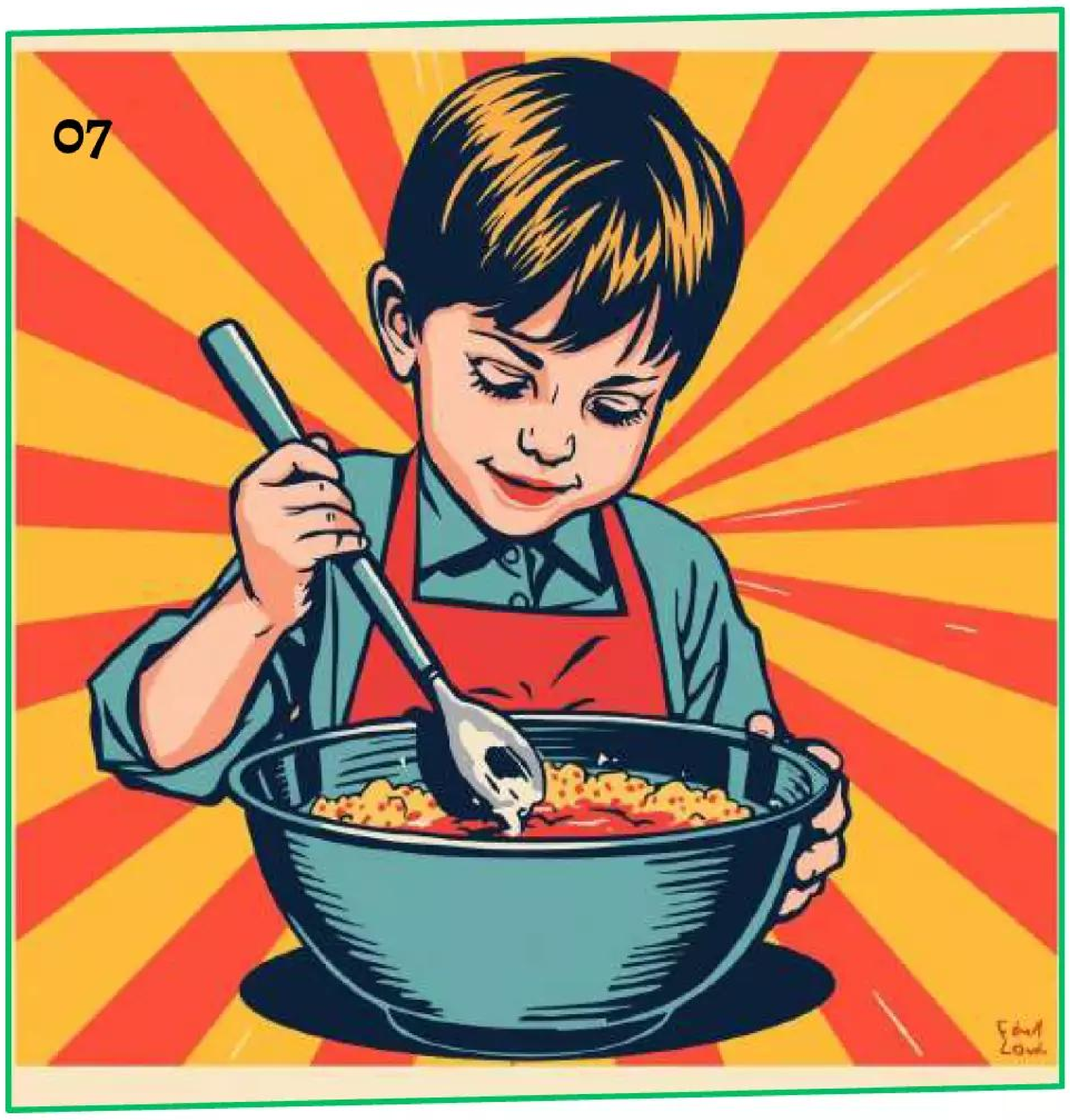
1. No-Read Recipe: Thankful Trail Mix
2. Gather ingredients
3. Take a bowl
4. Add first ingredient

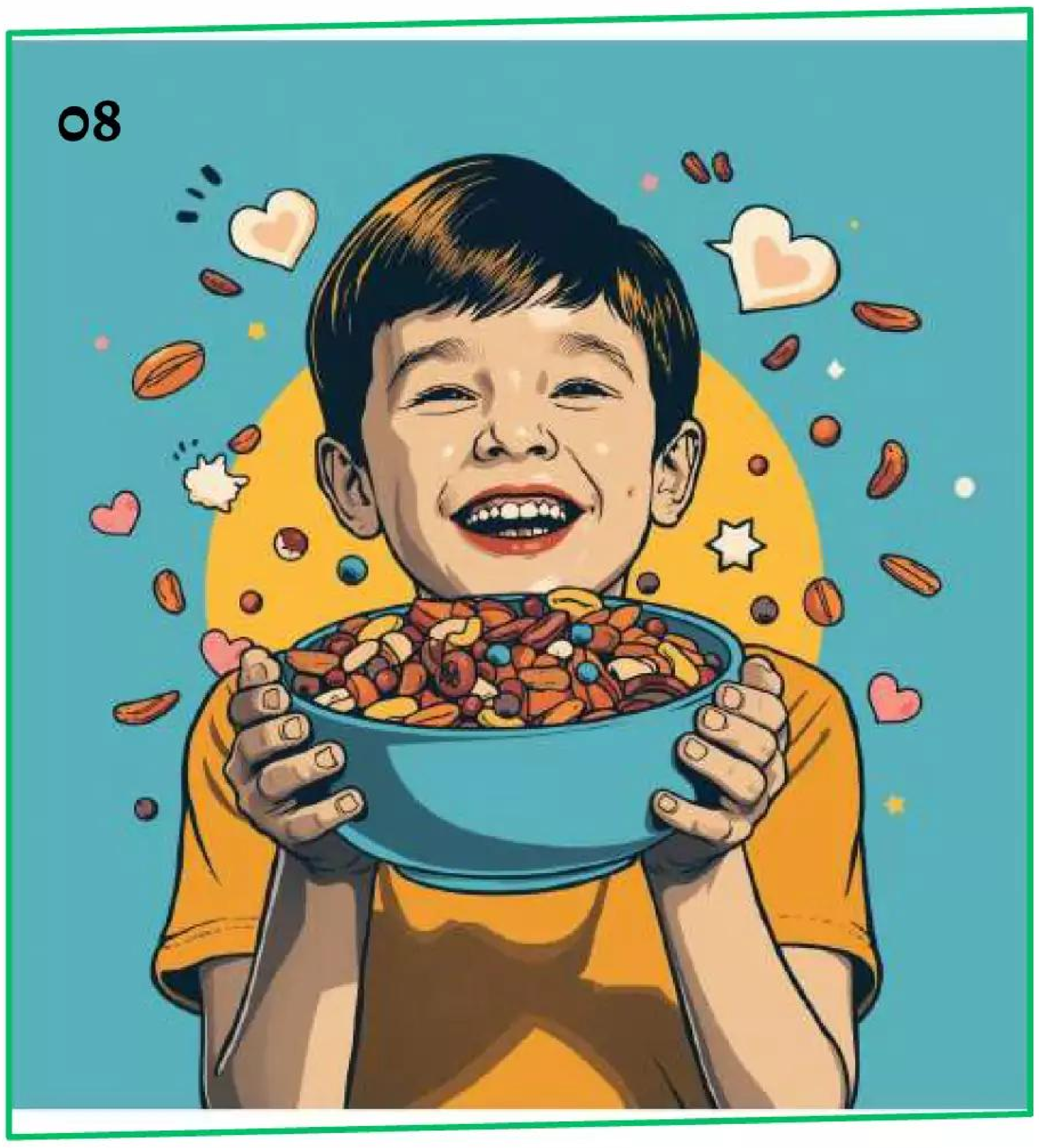
Thankful Trail Mix Recipe

5. Add second ingredient
6. Add third ingredient
7. Mix ingredients
8. Celebrate and enjoy









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Story Building

Tell Your Tale:
Comic Book Creator

Welcome to Story Building, a fun space where kids and teens can explore creativity through visual storytelling. In this activity, we guide young learners, especially those with dyslexia, to create a six-panel comic strip about a time they overcame a challenge. Each panel includes prompts to help them think about the story, such as What happened first, How did you feel, and What did you do to solve the problem.

Kids can draw the scenes, add speech bubbles, or write short sentences, making it easy to express ideas visually while building confidence. Parents and caregivers will find this activity helpful because it encourages reflection, creativity, and dyslexia-friendly learning in a supportive, playful way.

The goal is to make storytelling exciting and empowering, turning each panel into a small adventure. Kids can experiment with characters, settings, and expressions, showing emotions and actions in their own style. By the end, they have a complete comic strip celebrating resilience and creativity. This exercise encourages self-expression, problem-solving, and pride in achievements, while allowing kids to write, draw, and illustrate their own experiences, making learning fun, interactive, and inspiring for every child.

COMIC BOOK CREATOR TEMPLATE

Design Your Own Super-Hero Shield

Strengths

Tech Corner

Giving Thanks with Tech

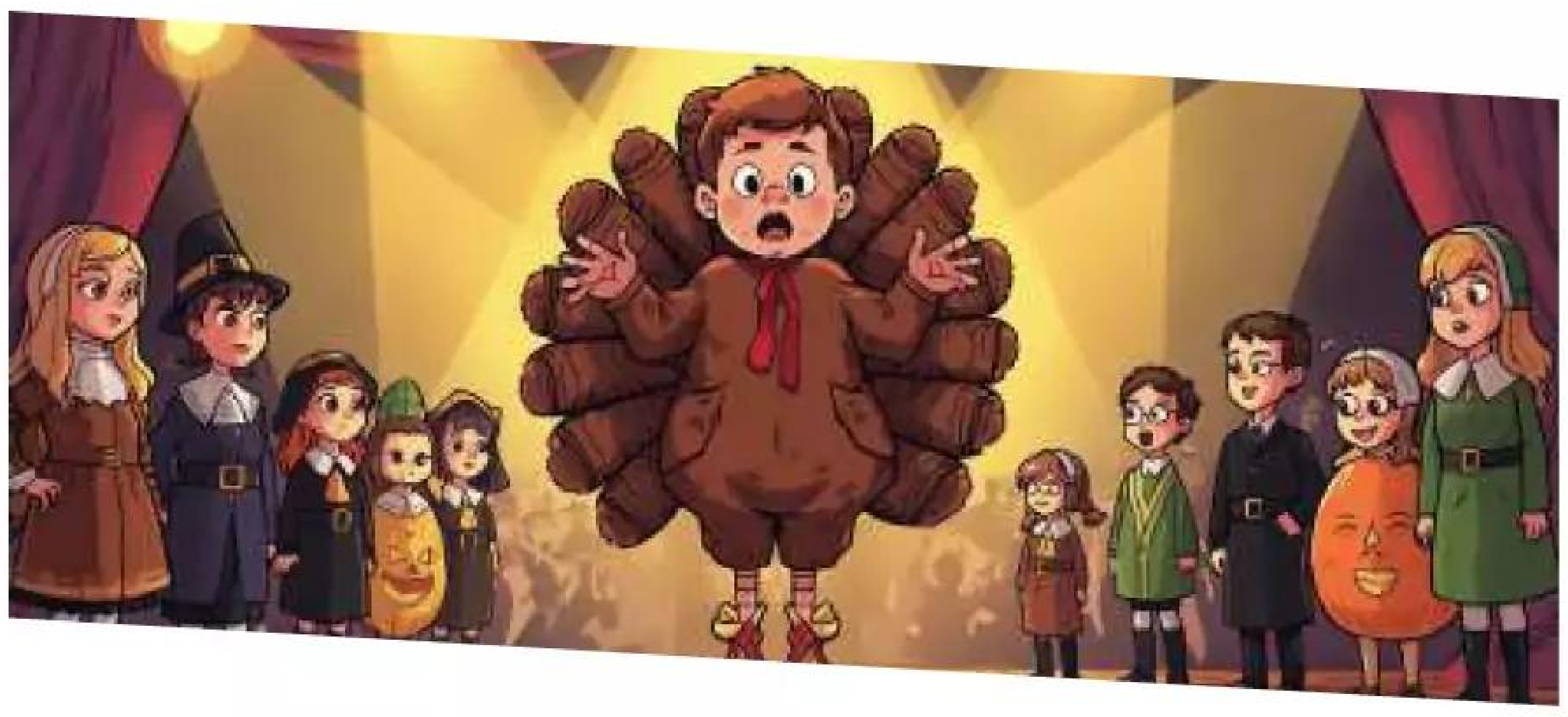
In the digital age, technology offers creative ways for kids to express gratitude, especially for those with dyslexia. Voice-to-text apps like **Voice Dream Writer** and **Google Keyboard** assist children in articulating thank-you messages without the stress of traditional writing. These tools convert spoken words into text, enabling children to send heartfelt notes to family members or friends, fostering emotional connections and gratitude.

Additionally, drawing apps such as **Tayasui Sketches** and **Procreate Pocket** allow children to design personalized digital thank-you cards. These platforms offer a variety of brushes and colors, encouraging creativity and self-expression. By combining visual art with written messages, children can craft meaningful tokens of appreciation. For parents and caregivers, these tech tools provide an opportunity to support children in developing communication skills and emotional intelligence. By integrating these applications into daily routines, children can regularly practice expressing gratitude, enhancing their social and emotional development. Embracing technology in this manner not only aids in overcoming the challenges posed by dyslexia but also empowers children to communicate their feelings effectively.

Through these innovative tools, expressing thanks becomes an engaging and inclusive experience for all children.

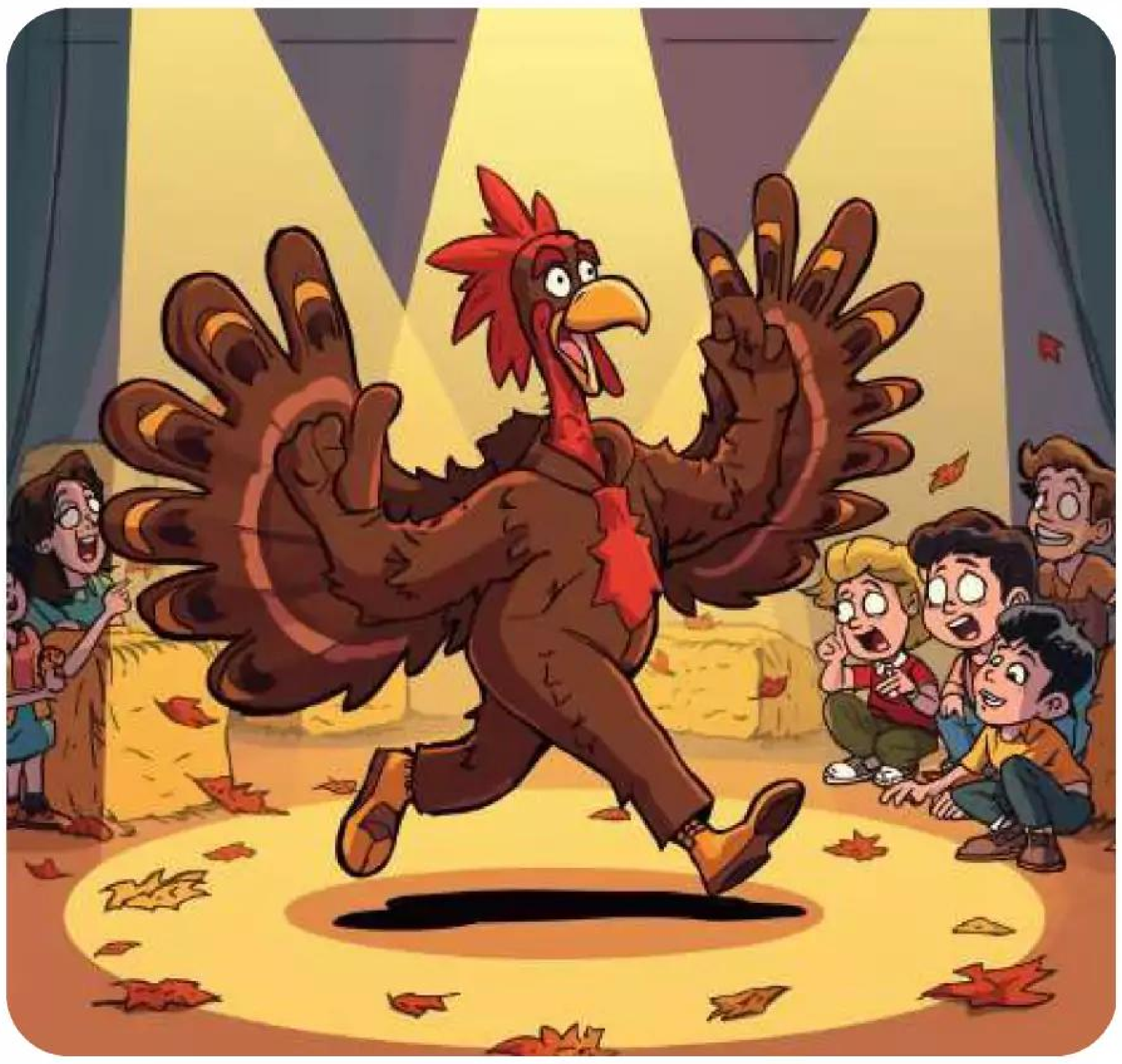
Story Time

The Great Thanksgiving Play Mix-Up

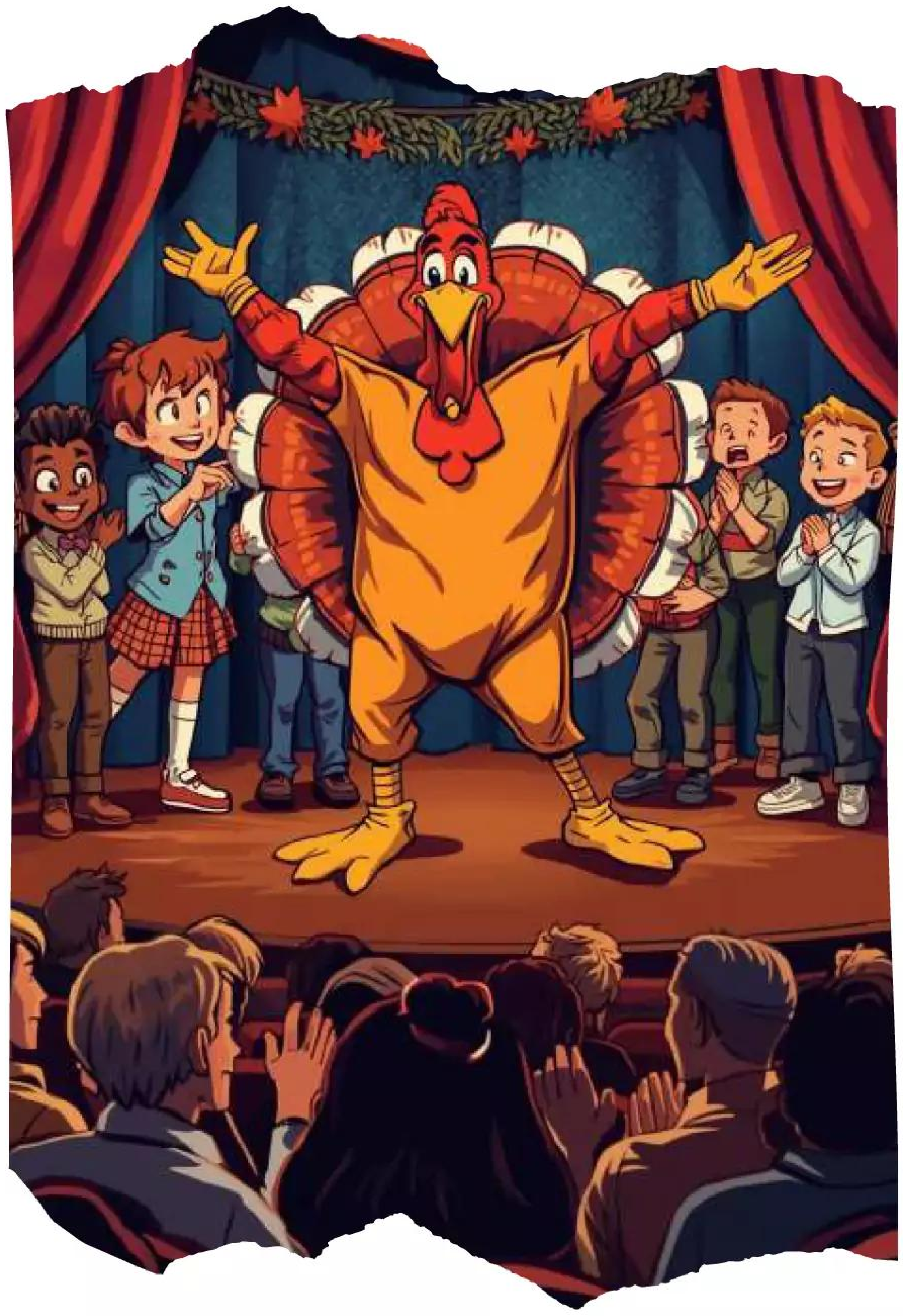


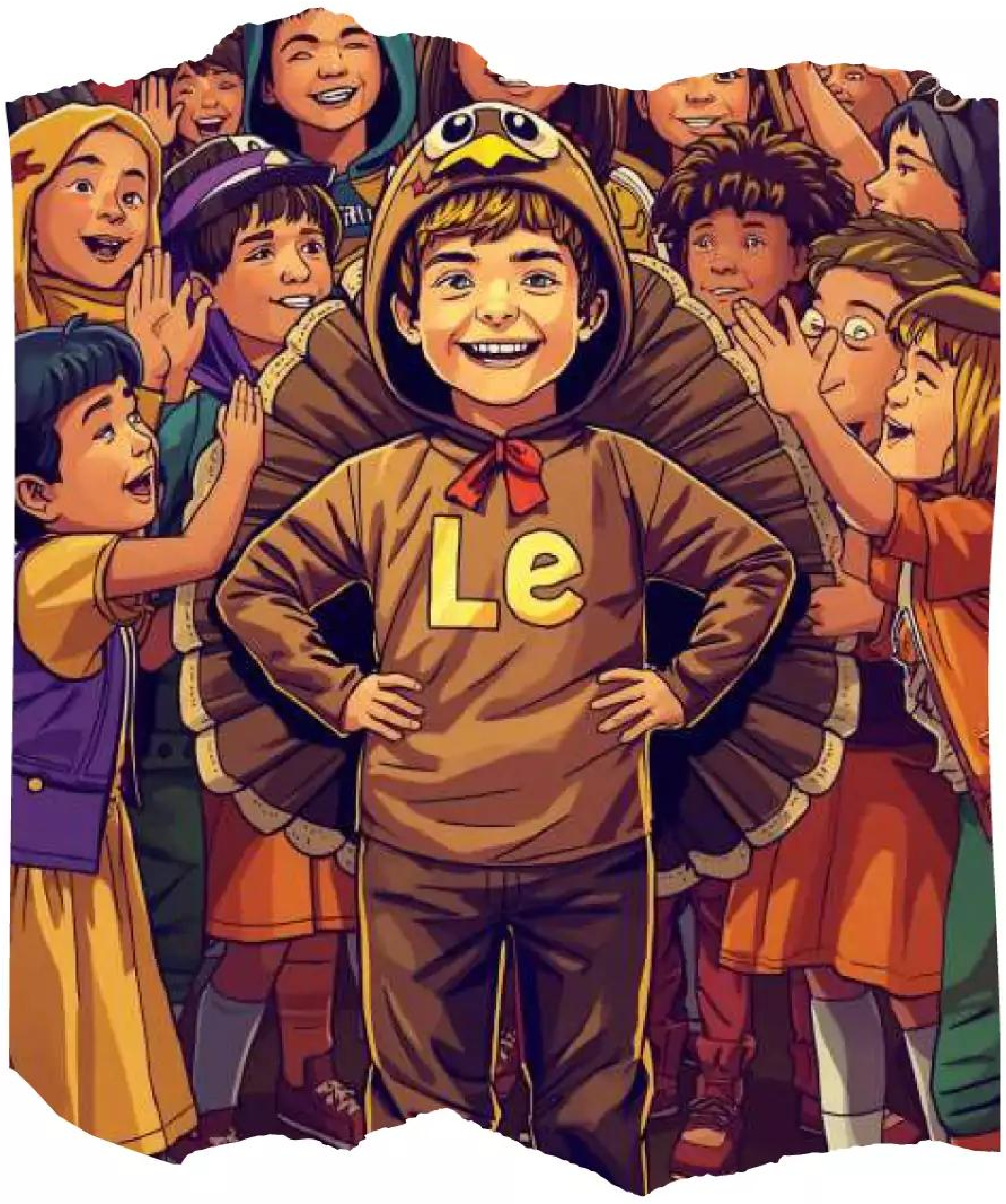
It was the day of the school's Thanksgiving play, and excitement buzzed through Ms. Carter's classroom. Leo, a bright and creative student with dyslexia, was playing the role of the turkey, and he had been practicing his lines for weeks. He loved the story, the colorful costumes, and the chance to make his friends laugh. As the curtains rose and the spotlight hit the stage, Leo felt a flutter in his stomach. He could hear the audience whispering, parents smiling, and classmates ready for their cues. But when it came time to speak, his mind went blank. The carefully memorized lines disappeared, leaving only silence.

For a moment, panic hit Leo. His heart raced, and he felt like the play might fall apart. Then he remembered something his teacher had told him, "Use your creativity, think on your feet, and the story will find you." Taking a deep breath, Leo improvised. Instead of his lines, he started acting out the turkey's thoughts through gestures, funny faces, and exaggerated movements. He flapped his wings, pretended to hide from the chef, and even tiptoed across the stage like a sneaky turkey.



The audience burst into laughter. Leo's classmates adapted quickly, feeding off his energy, adding their own silly reactions. The improvisation turned the play into a comedy, more entertaining than the original script. Parents clapped, teachers laughed, and even the principal whispered to the audience, "What a creative twist!" Leo felt proud and relieved, realizing that forgetting his lines had actually made the play even better.





After the performance, Leo's friends gathered around, praising his quick thinking and creativity. He learned an important lesson about resilience, problem-solving, and embracing his unique ways of learning. Dyslexia had made memorizing tricky, but it hadn't stopped him from shining on stage. That Thanksgiving, Leo didn't just play a turkey, he taught everyone the power of imagination, courage, and laughter, turning a potential mistake into a memorable and joyful moment for the whole school.

Gobble Gobble Giggles

Q: Why did the turkey join the spelling bee?
A: *Because it wanted to prove it wasn’t chicken!*

Q: What do you call a pumpkin who never gives up?
A: *A gourd-geous achiever!*

Q: Why did the dyslexic corn student keep trying?
A: *Because it wanted to pop with success!*

Q: How do turkeys stay positive at school?
A: *They always wing it!*

Q: Why did the kid bring crayons to the history class?
A: *To draw their way to understanding!*

Q: What did the autumn leaf say to the struggling student?
A: *Fall down seven times, get up eight!*

Q: Why did the corn cob do extra homework?
A: *It wanted to be all ears!*

Q: How does a turkey celebrate finishing a tough assignment?
A: *With a gobble of joy!*

Q: Why did the pumpkin practice every day?
A: *Because it wanted to squash its mistakes!*

For You & You Alone

Your Bounce-Back Kit

BOUNCE
BACK KIT

Supporting a child with dyslexia involves more than academic intervention; it requires nurturing emotional resilience. Children with dyslexia often face challenges that can impact their self-esteem and motivation. As a parent or caregiver, your role is pivotal in fostering a positive mindset and helping your child navigate these challenges with confidence. Encouraging open communication about their feelings and experiences allows them to feel understood and supported. Recognizing their efforts, rather than focusing solely on outcomes, reinforces the value of persistence and hard work.

Building resilience in children with dyslexia also involves creating a structured yet flexible environment that accommodates their learning needs. Implementing consistent routines, breaking tasks into manageable steps, and providing tools like assistive technology can alleviate frustration and promote a sense of accomplishment. It's essential to celebrate small victories and encourage self-advocacy, empowering your child to seek help when needed. By emphasizing strengths and fostering a growth mindset, you can help your child develop the resilience necessary to overcome obstacles and thrive academically and emotionally. Remember, your support and understanding are crucial in helping your child build their personal "Bounce-Back Kit."

Mindfulness & Me

5 Ways to Reset a Rough Day

When things feel overwhelming, especially for kids with dyslexia, it's important to have simple tools to help calm down and reset. Here are five easy strategies that can make a big difference:

1. Take 5 Deep Breaths

Breathing slowly helps calm the body and mind. Try the "flower and bubble" technique: imagine holding a flower, breathe in deeply through your nose, then blow out slowly through your mouth like you're blowing bubbles. This can help reduce stress and anxiety.

2. Draw How You Feel

Expressing emotions through drawing can be powerful. Grab some paper and colors, and draw what you're feeling. It doesn't have to be perfect-just let your feelings flow onto the page.

This activity can help process emotions and improve focus.

3. Listen to Music

Music can be a great way to relax. Put on your favorite calming songs and let the music help you unwind. This can help shift your mood and provide a comforting break.

4. Talk to Someone

Sharing your thoughts and feelings with a trusted friend, parent, or teacher can lighten your load. Talking things out helps you feel understood and supported.

5. Take a Break

Sometimes, stepping away from a task can help clear your mind. Take a short walk, stretch, or do something you enjoy for a few minutes. This can help you return to your work feeling refreshed and ready to tackle challenges.

OUR SUPPORT TEAM

Whom do you ask for help?
Parents, Teachers, Friends,
Siblings, or Tutor?

For Parents & Guardians

The Gift of Struggle: How to Foster Grit

As parents and caregivers, it's natural to want to shield our children from challenges, especially when they struggle with dyslexia. We often feel an urge to step in and fix things immediately to prevent frustration or failure. However, constantly solving problems for them can unintentionally limit their development of resilience and grit.

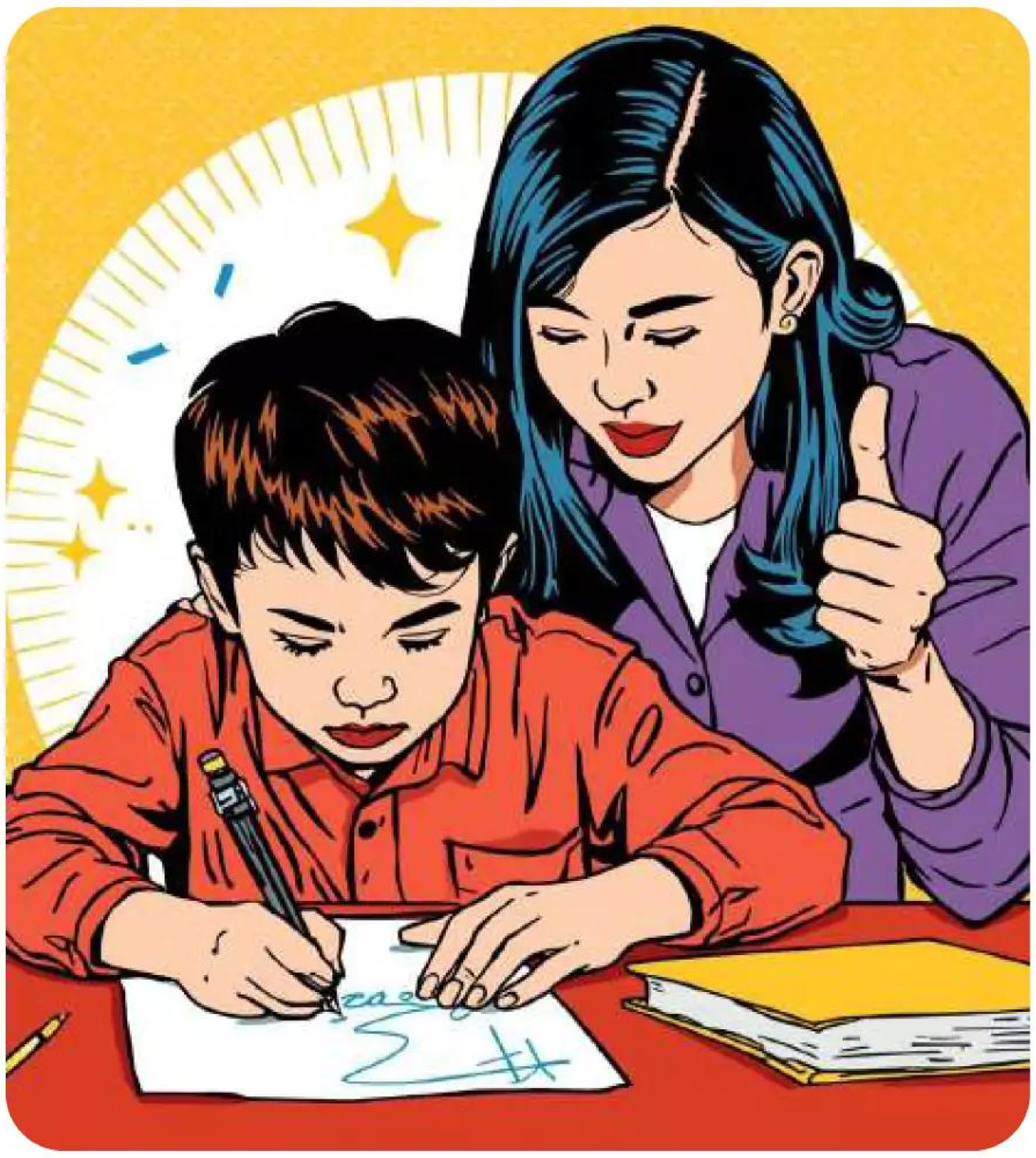
Allowing children to experience manageable struggles helps them learn persistence, problem-solving, and confidence in their own abilities, creating a foundation for long-term growth.

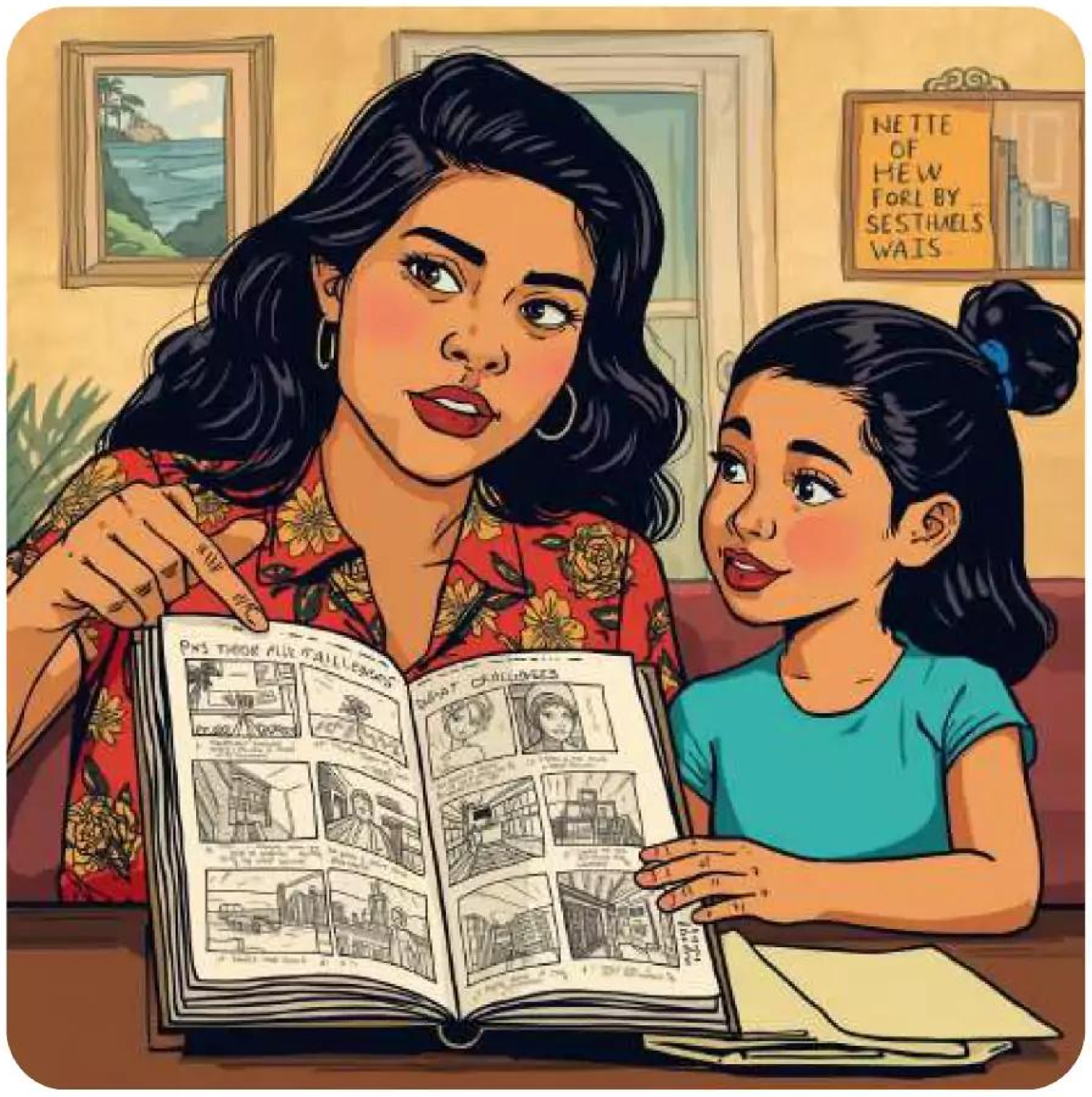
Validating your child's feelings is an essential first step. Acknowledge their frustrations and challenges without immediately offering solutions. This helps them feel heard and understood, and it gives them space to process emotions. For example, saying, "I see you're finding this difficult, and that's okay," can provide reassurance and support.

These moments of empathy encourage children to trust their own judgment and recognize that it is normal to face difficulties.

Praising effort over outcome is another key strategy. Instead of focusing on natural talent or final results, emphasize the hard work and determination your child puts into tasks. Saying, "I admire how hard you worked on that assignment," rather than, "You're so smart," teaches them that persistence and practice lead to improvement.

Research shows that children praised for effort develop a growth mindset, which motivates them to continue trying even when tasks are challenging.





Sharing your own challenges and strategies for overcoming them can also make a big difference. When parents talk about their struggles and how they navigated setbacks, children learn that difficulties are a normal part of life. Incorporating these approaches daily-validating feelings, praising effort, and modeling perseverance-equips children with the tools to tackle challenges confidently.

The goal is not to eliminate struggles, but to empower children to face them with determination, patience, and resilience.

Expert Insight

Cultivating a Growth Mindset at Home

Q: What is a growth mindset, and how can it benefit my child with dyslexia?

A growth mindset is the belief that abilities and intelligence can be developed through effort, learning, and perseverance. In contrast, a fixed mindset holds that intelligence is static and unchangeable. For children with dyslexia, adopting a growth mindset is particularly beneficial. It encourages resilience and a positive attitude towards challenges, helping them understand that difficulties are opportunities for growth rather than insurmountable obstacles.

Q: How can I foster a growth mindset at home?

Dr. Emily Johnson, a child psychologist specializing in learning differences, suggests several strategies:

- **Praise Effort, Not Just Results**: Focus on the process rather than the outcome. For example, say, "I admire how hard you worked on that project," instead of "You're so smart." This reinforces the value of effort and persistence.
- **Normalize Mistakes:** Teach your child that making mistakes is a natural part of learning. Encourage them by saying, "It's okay to make mistakes. That's how we learn."
- **Model a Growth Mindset**: Demonstrate your own learning process. Share stories of challenges you've faced and how you overcame them, emphasizing the effort involved.

Community Corner

Share Your Feast!

This Thanksgiving, Sparkle Buds invites families to participate in a heartwarming initiative that combines creativity, gratitude, and community support. We're launching the "Thankful Trail Mix" campaign, encouraging families to craft their own unique trail mixes using ingredients that symbolize what they're thankful for. Whether it's crunchy nuts for strength, sweet dried fruits for joy, or colorful candies for diversity, each mix tells a personal story of gratitude.

Once your trail mix is ready, share a photo on social media with the hashtag **#SparkleBudsGratitude**. This simple act not only spreads positivity but also raises awareness about dyslexia and the importance of community support. All submissions will be featured on our social media platforms, celebrating the diverse ways families express thankfulness.

In addition to sharing your creations, consider donating to local dyslexia support organizations. Your contributions can make a significant impact, providing resources and assistance to families navigating the challenges of dyslexia. Together, we can build a supportive community that uplifts and empowers every learner.

Join us in this festive endeavor, and let's make this Thanksgiving a time to reflect, share, and give back. Your participation helps create a ripple effect of kindness and understanding in our community.

GRIT
CHAMPION!

Certificate

Your Name

____

DATE: ______________________

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